

258(a)(2) of the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act of 1985; to the Committee on the Budget.

ADDITIONAL COSPONSORS

S. 1493

At the request of Mr. BOND, the name of the Senator from Montana (Mr. BURNS) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1493, a bill to forgive interest payments for a 2-year period on certain disaster loans to small business concerns in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks perpetrated against the United States on September 11, 2001, to amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to provide tax relief for small business concerns, and for other purposes.

S. 1505

At the request of Mrs. BOXER, the name of the Senator from Florida (Mr. GRAHAM) was added as a cosponsor of S. 1505, a bill to authorize the Secretary of Commerce to establish a Travel and Tourism Promotion Bureau.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. HARKIN:

S. 1628. A bill to strengthen the safety net for agricultural producers, to enhance resource conservation and rural development, to provide for farm credit, agricultural research, nutrition, and related programs, to ensure consumers abundant food and fiber, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

Mr. HARKIN. Madam President, today I am pleased to introduce the Agriculture, Conservation and Rural Enhancement Act of 2001. The legislation is a solid starting point for the next farm bill. This bill represents a comprehensive, balanced approach that protects farm income, promotes conservation, expands production of farm-based renewable energy and creates new economic opportunities in rural communities. The bill is the right approach to farm policy in the 21st Century because it builds on successful core farm programs and charts a new, conservation-oriented agriculture policy for the future.

My legislation uses a four-pronged approach to make good on our commitments to American farmers and rural communities. These four components—promoting conservation, protecting and boosting farm income, expanding jobs and economic opportunities in rural communities and increasing renewable energy production—provide the solid foundation we need to help ensure our farm families and rural areas prosper.

First, conservation is a cornerstone of the bill, including the creation of the Conservation Security Act, (CSA). This program provides flexible incentives for farmers to engage in new con-

servation practices on working agriculture land and rewards farmers who already employ them. In addition to CSA, the bill increases acreage for the Conservation Reserve Program and Wetlands Reserve Program. It also increases the funding for the Environmental Quality Incentives Program as well as the Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program. The bill also expands the farm land protection program, enacts a new grassland reserve program and permanently authorizes the Resource Conservation and Development program.

While rewarding farmers for conservation practices that benefit all of society is an important way to meet our commitment to farmers, providing solid income protection is equally important. The bill will improve farm income by increasing loan rates for most commodities, setting a floor on those rates, continuing fixed direct payments and creating a new counter-cyclical income protection system.

As all of my colleagues are aware, the farm bill must address the needs of others in addition to farmers and ranchers. This legislation will improve the quality of life for all of America's rural communities by creating jobs and economic growth in rural areas. The Rural Development title of this bill provides grants and loan programs to help create and expand businesses to provide jobs and assists communities by helping improve their community facilities. The title also expands grants for farmer-based groups, to help them add value to their production, helping to boost farm income and create jobs, it provides funding to expand broadband access for rural Americans, and provides grants to improve firefighter and first responder training.

The fourth prong of the my approach is increasing renewable energy production. This proposal provides a full range of initiatives designed to help and encourage farmers and ranchers to develop renewable energy projects including wind, solar, biomass and geothermal sources. These projects will help boost farm and rural incomes, improve air quality and promote the nation's energy security.

While the bill emphasizes a four-pronged approach, it is comprehensive in nature. The bill also includes important titles on nutrition, research, forestry, credit, competition, and trade that when taken together form a proposal that moves farm policy in the right direction in the 21st century.

I hope the Senate will be able to move quickly on this legislation. I will continue to work with members of the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry in an open process to help meet our commitments to farm families and all members of rural communities.

I ask unanimous consent to print in the RECORD a summary of the legisla-

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

A SUMMARY

TITLE I—COMMODITY PROGRAMS

The bill authorizes the Secretary to enter into contracts with producers of wheat, corn, grain sorghum, barley, oats, rice, soybeans, minor oilseeds, and upland cotton that entitle producers to receive direct payments on eligible cropland for the 2003 through 2006 fiscal years and counter-cyclical payments on eligible cropland for the 2002 through 2006 crop years. The bill establishes the direct payment rate and a target revenue per crop acre for each of the covered commodities. Producers will report their crop acreage and yields during the base period of 1998 to 2001 to determine updated base acres and payment yields.

Nonrecourse loans are available for all covered commodities plus extra long staple cotton, wool, mohair, honey, dry peas, lentils and chickpeas. Loan rates are increased from current levels for all covered commodities except oilseeds. The soybean loan rate is decreased by 6 cents per bushel and the loan rates for minor oilseeds are fixed at current rates. The marketing loan provisions and loan deficiency payments of current law are continued. The bill limits loan eligibility across all loan commodities by establishing a maximum number of units eligible for the loan.

To be eligible for contract payments or loan benefits producers must meet conservation compliance and wetlands protection. Further, contract acreage must use the land for an agricultural or conserving use and can be planted to any crop except most fruits and vegetables.

The bill extends the milk price support program at \$9.90 per hundredweight through 2006. It eliminates the marketing assessment on sugar and authorizes the Secretary to implement allotments on domestic sugar production. The bill extends the current peanut program.

TITLE II—CONSERVATION

The Conservation title provides a comprehensive, national approach to voluntary conservation. For the first time, all farmers and ranchers and livestock owners will have the full range of options for employing conservation practices on their lands in production and for lands taken out of production. The title enhances the existing proven conservation programs by increasing funding and including important policy changes. Two new programs, a broad-based incentive program for all land-based production and a grasslands easement program, complete the array of agricultural conservation programs.

The centerpiece of the new conservation title is the Conservation Security Act (CSA), a broad-based voluntary locally-driven incentives program for conservation on working land. Farmers receive payments for maintaining or adopting conservation practices. Providing incentive payments to farmers to maintain conservation practices ensures retaining the important environmentally successful accomplishments already occurring on farms and ranches. Using the CSA, farmers and ranchers will have the tools to enhance wildlife habitat and implement environmentally-sound practices on land in production leading to improved water, air and soil quality and increased wildlife populations.

The bill also increases funding for current conservation programs with a proven record of enhancing natural resources. The bill increases acreage for the Conservation Reserve